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Note by the Secretary-General

Addendum

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1. Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service

(Special consultative status granted 1970)

Aims and purposes of the organization

The Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service (CCIVS) was created in 1948 under the aegis of UNESCO. Since 1948, the CCIVS secretariat has been based at UNESCO headquarters in Paris, and the Committee is working in close cooperation with UNESCO and other United Nations agencies for the promotion and development of voluntary service programmes in the fields of literacy, cultural heritage, tolerance, peace, environment, health, agriculture etc. Constitutionally (article 2 of the constitution), the purpose of CCIVS is the promotion and development of voluntary service towards peace, international understanding, improving the future of humanity, the support of United Nations principles, and cooperation and contribution to the implementation of the programmes and the initiatives of the United Nations and its bodies. CCIVS is an international NGO. At the end of 1997, there were 134 international and national members, with 237 national offices in 90 countries. Geographical membership has expanded over the period. There were many changes of membership, with expulsions of defunct members and the admission of new ones in existing countries. In addition, new members have been accepted from Armenia, Belarus, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Ethiopia, Libya, Maldives, Palestine, the Philippines, South Africa, Uganda, Venezuela, Zimbabwe and Zambia. In addition, new regional structures of members have now been established in East, South and West Africa, East Europe, Asia and the Mediterranean.

Participation in the work of the Economic and Social Council

(a) CCIVS: Participated in the United Nations Youth Forum (preparatory meetings and conference in 1996);

(b) Participated in different meetings and consultations organized by the regional commissions;

(c) Was involved in the preparation of the International Year of Volunteers, 2001 (with UNV).

Cooperation with United Nations programmes and agencies

Below is a description of regular liaison contacts and projects that CCIVS has been implementing in cooperation with the United Nations and United Nations agencies (mainly UNESCO). The projects have been implemented with the technical and/or financial assistance of United Nations agencies.

Cooperation with the United Nations

CCIVS works with the Youth Unit of the United Nations Secretariat for developing youth voluntary programmes and maintaining regular liaison regarding voluntary service and youth issues in general. CCIVS:

(a) Participated in preparatory meetings for the last two United Nations Youth Forums;

(b) Participated in United Nations Youth Forums.

CCIVS has official accreditation to the regional commissions. Since 1994, regular contacts have been made with ESCAP in order to develop voluntary service programmes in the Asia and Pacific region. CCIVS participated in:

(a) A regional expert meeting on youth training needs (Bangkok, 1997);

(b) ESCAP missions for the development of voluntary service programmes in the ESCAP region.

Cooperation with United Nations agencies

UNESCO: Since CCIVS was created under the aegis of UNESCO in 1948, its secretariat is based in UNESCO headquarters in Paris, and has had official formal relations with UNESCO for more than 49 years. CCIVS works very closely with the main sectors of the organization (culture, education, social sciences etc.).

CCIVS cooperation with UNESCO is normally programmed and adopted by the UNESCO General Conference every two years (UNESCO programme and budget). CCIVS:

(a) Has cooperated in the field of UNESCO programme implementation since 1994, including:

(i) More than 40 projects in Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe and South America;

(ii) Participation in conferences, consultations at UNESCO headquarters and in the field;

(iii) Studies and publications (more than 20 publications);

(b) Has participated in all UNESCO General Conferences;

(c) Has implemented UNESCO resolutions relevant to CCIVS (voluntary service activities, youth projects, volunteers for cultural heritage etc.);

(d) Has undertaken liaison and daily work with all UNESCO sectors/divisions and field offices.

Cooperation with other United Nations agencies and Economic and Social Council subsidiary bodies

As in previous years, CCIVS has cooperated with different United Nations agencies (FAO, World Bank, UNDP, UNV, UNICEF). Apart from regular contacts and liaison between the CCIVS secretariat and those United Nations agencies, special projects have been implemented by CCIVS with their technical/financial assistance. The following projects were organized with UNDP:

(a) An evaluation mission on voluntary service in West Africa by the CCIVS Director (1997);

(b) A reconstruction project in Liberia (1997);

(c) Participation in a conference on world development report (1997).

CCIVS has also cooperated with UNV (regular programme and liaison with UNV and preparation of the International Year of Volunteers, 2001), the World Bank (environmental project in Togo in 1998) and FAO (consultations on rural youth programmes and voluntary service), as well as UNICEF.

Other relevant activities

CCIVS has:

(a) Contributed to the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 50/81 and 52/80;

(b) Contributed to the implementation of relevant UNESCO resolutions;

(c) Implemented action 3 of the international agenda of the report of the World Commission on Culture and Development.

2. Council of International Programs

(Special consultative status granted 1989)

The Council of International Programs, through its affiliates and its relationship to the Council of International Fellowship, promotes worldwide educational, cultural and professional enrichment for individuals who are concerned with human services and related professions. It also includes those individuals who while the field of their occupation may not be itself concerned with human capacity development nonetheless concern themselves with human services. The Council of International Programs (CIP) meets its goals and objectives by providing enrichment and training through an on-site professional trainingship, courses at local universities, seminars, conferences etc.

CIP individualizes its programme to meet specific needs of individuals or small groups. Thus, the programme has rolling admissions. The continuous interaction of small groups of individuals from different cultures with common interests allows for the development of a network across borders.

United Nations-related activities

The NGO representative of CIP attends briefings held for NGOs. The Council is represented on the UNICEF NGO Committee, participating in its working group on education. CIP was represented at the World Summit for Social Development. The organization was also represented at the International Forum for Child Welfare, held in Canada in 1996. The organization was represented at other presentations such as human development challenges in the Russian Federation sponsored by UNDP.

The organization's international conference, which is held every two years, met in Scotland during this period. In 1999, it will meet in the Netherlands. While all participants have been encouraged to make contact with their local, country UNICEF or United Nations office, the organization will be targeting specific countries in 1999. This will be an effort to encourage partnership with other NGOs as well as UNICEF. We will be supporting some of the initiatives on urban education.

We are in the process of contacting our membership in countries that have been designated by UNICEF for specific initiatives for the NGO Committee on Education: India, Thailand, Egypt, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Guatemala, the Philippines and Senegal. In addition, we are exploring the possibility of collaboration between CIP and Childhood Education International in those countries.

The NGO representative continues to facilitate the use of various United Nations materials, as requested by members. Recently, the organization did a survey of its membership to produce a more current and accurate assessment of its membership. The organization, through its relationship with Council of International Fellowship, has been able to obtain a better profile of its membership, as

follows, there are active units in some areas and individual members in others; countries or areas marked with an asterisk(*) have active national organizations but no available membership count:

Albania (2), Argentina (10), Australia (6), Austria (2), Bahamas (4), Bahrain (1), Bangladesh (6), Barbados (5), Belize (6), Bolivia (2), Botswana (1), Brazil (3), Bulgaria (1), Cameroon (2), Canada (20), Chile (2), China (5), Columbia (3), Congo (2), Costa Rica (8), Côte d'Ivoire,* Croatia (2), Cyprus (1), Czech Republic (2), Democratic People's Republic of Korea (1), Denmark (4), Egypt (2), El Salvador (4), Estonia (1), Ethiopia (2), Finland (8), France (5), Gambia (1), Georgia (1), Germany,* Ghana (9), Greece,* Grenada (1), Guatemala (2), Guyana (3), Honduras (2), Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China (1), Hungary,* Iceland (2), India,* Indonesia (1), Ireland (2), Israel,* Italy,* Jamaica,* Japan,* Jordan (2), Kenya (2), Kuwait (1), Latvia (5), Lebanon (1), Lesotho (1), Liberia (2), Lithuania (5), Malawi (2), Malaysia (1), Madagascar (1), Malta (3), Mauritius (1), Mexico (3), Morocco (8), Mozambique (1), Namibia (2), Nepal (1), Netherlands,* Netherlands Antilles (1), Nigeria (3), Norway,* Panama (1), Paraguay (1), Peru,* Philippines (2), Poland,* Portugal,* Republic of Korea (1), Republic of Moldova (1), Romania,* Russian Federation,* Saudi Arabia (1), Senegal (1), Sierra Leone (1), Singapore (1), Slovakia (3), South Africa,* Spain,* Saint Lucia (1), Suriname (2), Swaziland (1), Sweden,* Switzerland,* Taiwan Province of China (3), Thailand (1), Trinidad (1), Turkey,* Uganda (2), Ukraine (3), United Kingdom,* United Republic of Tanzania (2), United States Virgin Islands (1), Uruguay (1), Venezuela (2), Yemen (1), Yugoslavia (2), Zambia (2) and Zimbabwe (1).

The organization continues to encourage its alumnae to support the initiatives of the United Nations and to support the Convention on the Rights of the Child. That emphasis has been reflected in the requests for individualized programmes among exchange participants.

Funding

The organization continues to be heavily dependent on voluntarism. Its funding sources are now primarily from foundations, corporate support and fund-raising by affiliates. Some Governments, in a limited way, support some of the participants who wish to engage in the exchange programmes. A focus on recruitment to increase the number of participants is being addressed. The programme membership appears to have a strong network that offers support to individual members and national affiliates.

Future plans

As mentioned in a previous report, the organization has relocated to Ohio, where it was started. There has been further thought to restructuring; however, this has not been clearly defined. The aims and goals of the organization remain commitment to international understanding and cooperation for human capacity development.

3. International Federation of University Women

(Special consultative status granted 1947)

Introduction

The International Federation of University Women (IFUW) is a non-profit, non-governmental organization comprised of more than 180,000 graduate women speaking out locally, nationally and internationally on priority issues of common concern. IFUW, with its 67 national federations and associations, is committed to the right of women and girls to education so that they realize their full potential. The mission of IFUW is to advocate for the improvement of the status of women and girls at the international level, promote lifelong education and enable graduate women to use their expertise to effect change. IFUW offers an international fellowship programme. The Federation's study and action programme theme since 1992 has been "Women's future, world future: education for survival and progress". Between 1995 and 1998, there were four specific focal priorities: education, poverty, violence and the adolescent girl.

During the years under review, the number of affiliates in IFUW has grown from 59 to 67, with new members coming mainly from developing countries and Central and Eastern Europe. Severe economic constraints faced by members in countries in transition continue to make their participation in IFUW programmes a difficult challenge.

IFUW's general budget is completely funded by membership contributions. Grants from UNICEF and national development agencies helped to finance IFUW's special programme on capacity-building and organizational strengthening for women's and children's NGOs in the Baltic region, Eastern Europe, sub-Saharan Africa and Asia.

IFUW continues to cooperate with four international women's NGOs on joint women and development projects in project 5-0, a UNESCO co-action project.

Participation in the work of the Economic and Social Council

IFUW representatives attend most meetings of the Council, giving special attention to sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women in New York, the Commission on Human Rights and the Committee on the Rights of the Child at Geneva, as well as, to a lesser extent, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice at Vienna. IFUW is also very involved in activities with UNESCO in Paris, and follows with increased attention the activities of the ILO at Geneva.

Conferences

IFUW has been represented at United Nations world conferences, including meetings of preparatory committees and regional meetings. IFUW cooperated with other NGOs to ensure that the role of women and girls was mainstreamed through conference documentation, as well as receiving specific attention. For the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, IFUW gave particular emphasis to the issue of the girl child.

At the International Conference on Population and Development, IFUW was represented by two experts in reproductive health and population.

At the World Summit for Social Development, five IFUW representatives attended. IFUW was a key contributor to a workshop organized by the NGO Committee of UNICEF and other NGOs on the theme "Poverty: what way out?", which stressed the need for empowerment of women and girls. An IFUW member was a keynote speaker in the session on the girl child and gender equity.

At the Fourth World Conference on Women, IFUW participated with a delegation of five members led by the IFUW President, who addressed a plenary session with a statement on peace. Many members attended as part of their national delegations. IFUW also sent representatives to preparatory meetings in 1994 and 1995, as well as to the regional meetings at Jakarta in June 1994 (Asia and Pacific); Buenos Aires in September 1994 (Latin America and the Caribbean); Vienna in October 1994 (Europe and North America) and Dakar in November 1994 (Africa). IFUW was instrumental in the introduction of the girl child as one of the critical areas of concern in the Platform for Action adopted by the Conference.

At Habitat II, IFUW participated with a delegation of five, led by the IFUW President. Two representatives addressed the main Conference on the topics of capacity-building and women in development, as a new participation of NGOs. The IFUW President presented a paper entitled "The effects of urbanization on women and children" during a workshop organized by the UNICEF NGO Committee. The Turkish Association of University Women was a leader in organizing the Forum of NGOs which was run parallel to the main Conference.

At the UNESCO Fifth International Conference on Adult Education held at Hamburg in July 1997, IFUW was represented by an expert in education.

At regional conferences held in 1997 in preparation of the UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education in Paris in October 1998, IFUW had representatives at Dakar for Africa, at Tokyo for Asia and the Pacific, at Palermo for Europe and at Beirut (in early 1998) for the Middle East. They insisted on the specific problems faced by women in higher education, especially in leadership positions in the academia.

Other United Nations meetings

IFUW has been active at the thirty-eighth through the forty-first sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women, especially through its roles as co-Chair of the NGO working group on girls based in New York, Convenor of the NGO working group on women's employment and economic development, and co-Convenor of the working group on women's participation in decision-making based at Geneva. It unites coalitions of NGOs to present oral and written statements focusing on the girl child, the need for a comprehensive human rights approach to women's health, the importance of cooperation between women's organizations in fighting poverty, women and the economy, decision-making, and education and training.

IFUW has been vigilant and made statements at the fiftieth through the fifty-third sessions of the Commission on Human Rights to encourage the integration in all agenda items of the mainstreaming of the rights of women and the introduction of the legal framework that would guarantee such mainstreaming in subsequent sessions. It has actively facilitated work in the general debate of the working group for the elaboration of the draft protocols on the rights of the child, in particular girl adolescents.

During the quadrennium, IFUW participated as observer at several technical meetings of the International Labour Organization and at the annual sessions of its Conference, making statements on women in the banking

sector, the employment of women in leadership roles in educational personnel, women in management, and encouraging greater ILO coordination with other human rights mechanisms in consistently including the differential impact of gender in all policies, programmes and practices. During the ILO Conference in June 1997, IFUW was one of the NGO organizers of a round table on the theme "Child labour: the invisible work of girls and domestic work".

Cooperation with United Nations programmes and specialized agencies

As one of 22 organizations in consultative status with UNIFEM and through its consultative relations with the Division for the Advancement of Women and INSTRAW, IFUW cooperates in programmes and preparation of meetings relating to women's issues.

With UNICEF, IFUW has continued to cooperate in girl child and capacity-building for development programmes, and has been very active as Treasurer of the Board of the UNICEF NGO Committee until June 1997. At the 1995 triennial conference, seminars were held on two issues related to the girl child: poverty and the girl child, and a multi-religious perspective on girlhood and education. One seminar was held jointly with UNESCO on higher education and the university curriculum. All three were presented as workshops during the NGO Forum parallel to the Fourth World Conference on Women.

At UNESCO, IFUW is one of 63 NGOs with formal consultative status after the reclassification of NGOs implied in the new directives. It is a member of the NGO collective consultations on literacy and education for all, and status of women and gender equality, and is especially active in the collective consultation on higher education. Among other activities, the President of IFUW and other IFUW representatives have contributed to studies for the preparation of the fifth UNESCO-NGO collective consultation on higher education in 1997 on the consequences of change for graduate employment. An IFUW representative will convene a thematic debate on issues and perspectives for women in higher education, and several members will participate as panellists, discussants and members of the IFUW delegation in the World Conference on Higher Education, to be held in Paris in October 1998.

Action in implementation of United Nations resolutions

At the IFUW triennial conference in August 1995, a resolution was passed asking national affiliates to urge their Governments to follow up and implement the recommendations included in the programmes of action adopted at the five United Nations conferences held from 1993 to 1996, with particular reference to the well-being of women and girls. At other meetings of IFUW, special workshops dealt with the girl child (1994), and follow-up to Beijing and Habitat II (1997).

At national levels, many IFUW affiliates conducted studies themselves or participated in coalitions of women NGOs to monitor their Governments on the follow-up of the platforms for action adopted at the Conferences, especially the Fourth World Conference on Women. For example the Canadian Federation was responsible for the preparation of the chapter on The Girl Child for the Canadian Follow-up Guide to Beijing 95: "Take Action for Equality, Development and Peace" published by the Canadian Beijing NGO Facilitating Committee, and the New Zealand Federation worked within the NGO Coordinating Committee which prepared "Beyond Beijing — New Zealand Women Respond".

United Nations reforms stress the importance of NGOs' participation in the work of the United Nations. IFUW values highly its consultative status with ECOSOC and its advocacy work at the international level. Coalitions among women NGOs on issues of common interest are becoming common practice and IFUW is working more and more along this pattern. It is now considering to participate as one of 16 NGOs in a project coordinated by the NGO Committee on the Status of Women in New York to prepare country reports on the implementation of CEDAW that will be presented along with the Governments reports to the Committee in 1999.

4. International Senior Citizens Association, Inc.

(Special consultative status granted 1970)

The International Senior Citizens Association (ISCA) was founded in 1963 by Marjorie Thorn Borchardt. Mrs. Borchardt believed that world peace and understanding could be achieved through the leadership of seniors around the world. ISCA is an independent organization open to all mature people regardless of nationality, race, creed or economic status. The purposes of ISCA are to act as a catalyst and forum for the exchange of ideas for mature voices on global issues; establish means of friendly communication among mature people for education and cultural development; enhance the prestige of mature people

in world affairs through utilization of their wisdom and experience; and cooperate with non-profit and government agencies working for the welfare and happiness of mature people throughout the world. ISCA currently represents membership in all five continents. It provides a global network of governmental, corporate, industrial organizations and individuals worldwide.

We have biennial conferences (held at Dublin in 1994 and at Manila in 1996). The purpose of the conference is to bring together representatives of all countries to discuss issues and concerns of seniors throughout the world.

Annual programmes

Marjorie Thorn Borchardt Award

This award in memory of our founder and first president, who contributed greatly to the enrichment of the lives of the elderly, is given to an outstanding volunteer who has contributed substantially in his or her efforts to work for the welfare and happiness of mature people throughout the world.

Borchardt International Pageant

This Pageant brings together and unites seniors from all ethnic communities. This is a day of cultural entertainment and ethnic exhibits to recognize all cultural and ethnic groups.

Forums

Speakers address global concerns related to senior citizen issues and the welfare of all peoples. Speakers have addressed the issues of medicare, social security, housing, health insurance and current events affecting seniors.

ISCA co-sponsors with other senior organizations many annual events in order to facilitate communication among the elderly, celebrate diversity for the purpose of world betterment, and promote the welfare and happiness of older persons. To name a few: African-American Heritage Celebration (February event); Asian and Pacific Islander Older Adults Festival (May event); Latin American Heritage Programme (September event); and the Central City Senior Programme (October event) which provides information to seniors, caregivers, mobility and/or sense-impaired persons and friends.

Our programmes urge seniors to work within their communities to ensure well-being and health for all, understanding of differences, and attention to the simple requirements of daily living.

The ISCA quarterly newsletter *Forum* is the primary vehicle for providing information to members of ISCA chapters throughout the world on how older persons can contribute to world betterment. ISCA has developed a worldwide network of concerned individuals, chapters and member organizations, and has emerged as a major voice for seniors worldwide. ISCA is very proud of its continuing growth. Since 1994, chapters and affiliates have greatly increased. We feel that that fact alone is impressive evidence of ISCA's importance and relevance to senior citizens throughout the world.

We are continuing our official affiliation with the United Nations initiated by Mrs. Borchardt in order to establish means and a forum by which older persons may contribute to world betterment and provide valuable input into global concerns relating to senior issues. Our affiliation with the United Nations provides a mechanism for providing input on senior citizen issues at a recognized and highly influential level.

Lois Wellington, ISCA President, attended the nineteenth General Assembly of the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations at Geneva (1–3 November 1994); Lois Wellington, President, and Christopher Valente, Chief Executive Officer, attended the forty-eighth annual NGO/DPI conference in New York (18–20 September 1995); Christopher Valente, Chief Executive Officer, and Yung-Ping Chen, Executive Board member, attended the forty-ninth annual DPI/NGO conference in New York (10–12 September 1996); and Christopher Valente, Chief Executive Officer, and Yuki Yao, ISCA New York representative to the United Nations, attended the fiftieth annual DPI/NGO conference in New York (10–12 September 1997).

ISCA is working with 88 cities in the county of Los Angeles, and has contacted all its international chapters worldwide to be involved in some capacity by implementing programmes and activities honouring the International Year of Older Persons, 1999.

To quote our founder, Marjorie Thorn Borchardt, "Ageing knows no distinctions between geographical borders or between political divisions; all are united under the bonds of age".

5. Socialist International

(General consultative status granted 1973)

Socialist International (SI) is a worldwide organization of socialist, social democratic and labour parties. Since its

re-establishment in 1951, SI has provided its members with a forum for political action, policy discussion, dialogue and exchange. Its statements and decisions advise member organizations and the international community of consensus views within the global family of socialist, social democratic and labour parties. SI seeks to strengthen democracy and to promote peace, economic and social development, and the full enjoyment of human, civil and political rights. In July 1995, Socialist International's consultative status was reclassified to general status by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

Since 1994, SI membership has increased from 111 to 139 political parties and organizations, with new members from Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Cameroon, Dominica, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Gabon, Georgia, Haiti, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Montenegro, Mozambique, the Niger, Panama, Poland, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia and the territories under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian Authority. Over this period, Socialist International has continued to strengthen its global character and universality, and to contribute to the objectives and work of the United Nations through its activities in every region of the world.

During the period in question, in fulfilment of a mandate to study the reform of the United Nations, a working group of the SI Committee for Peace, Security and Disarmament held a series of meetings at United Nations Headquarters in New York in January 1994 with officials responsible for political affairs and peace operations, and also held a number of meetings with permanent representatives of different regional groups at the United Nations and members of the Security Council. The group reported to a Socialist International Council meeting at Tokyo in May 1994.

In February 1994, the SI Committee on Economic Policy, Development and Environment held a special gathering at Geneva to focus on the role of international financial institutions, with the participation of representatives of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the regional economic commissions, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the International Labour Organization.

In 1994 and 1995, SI participated in preparatory discussions concerning the World Summit for Social Development, and attended meetings with the Chair of the Preparatory Committee and other officials of the United Nations.

In 1994, in preparation for the International Conference on Population and Development held at Cairo in September 1994, SI participated in a series of meetings held in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund.

The Fourth World Conference on Women, held at Beijing in September 1995, was a major focus of attention for SI and its members, who fully shared the objectives of the Conference and many of whom contributed to this initiative.

In June 1996, a meeting of the SI Committee on Local Authorities focused on the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), which a delegation of SI attended.

In September 1996, the Twentieth Socialist International Congress was held at United Nations Headquarters, New York, to underline the commitment of this organization to the principles and objectives of the United Nations. A number of guests from the United Nations diplomatic community attended.

During the period 1994–1997, SI has continually reiterated its support of the United Nations mandate to ensure global stability and security. Sharing the United Nations commitment to disarmament, SI extensively supported the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty through the activities of its Committee on Peace, Security and Disarmament. At its Council meeting in November 1997, SI unanimously endorsed the anti-personnel landmine treaty.

SI supported United Nations work in Mozambique, where SI liaised with officials of the United Nations and participated as observers in elections in October 1994 that marked the culmination of the United Nations-sponsored peace process.

Equally, SI closely followed peacekeeping operations in former Yugoslavia, and numerous contacts were made and discussions held with officers of the United Nations Protection Force and other United Nations officials. A number of visits were made to the region, including a visit by the SI President and Secretary-General in November 1995.

In the period 1994–1997, SI continued to actively encourage peace talks in the Middle East based on Security Council resolutions. In January 1996, an SI mission observed the elections of the Palestinian Legislative Council. In February 1996, an SI mission visited the Syrian Arab Republic, Lebanon and Israel for field-level discussions on the peace process. Over this period, a number of meetings

were held by the SI Middle East Committee (at Cairo in November 1994; at Tel Aviv, Gaza City and Amman in March 1995; and at Ramallah and Tel Aviv in May 1997).

SI, through the work of its specialized Committee on Human Rights, welcomed the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to its meeting at Geneva in November 1994, where discussions focused on human rights initiatives and mechanisms to foster and protect those rights.

SI shares the commitment of the United Nations to assist in ensuring the holding of free and fair elections in situations of transition to multi-party democracy and in other particular national circumstances, and election observation forms an important part of SI activity. In the period 1994–1997, Socialist International missions to observe elections were conducted in April 1994 to South Africa; in May 1994 to the Dominican Republic; in August 1994 to Mexico; in May 1996 and June-July 1996 (first and second rounds) to the Dominican Republic; and in October 1996 to Nicaragua.

Socialist International activities over the period 1994–1997 have reaffirmed this organization's wholehearted support for the United Nations, and its commitment to ensuring that international institutions for peace and cooperation are supported and equipped to fulfil their role.

6. Soroptimist International

(General consultative status granted 1984)

Soroptimist International

SI is an association of four soroptimist federations, with 97,022 members, and 3,124 clubs in 112 countries and territories. Its objectives are (a) to maintain high ethical standards in business, the professions, and other aspects of life;(b) to strive for human rights for all people, in particular to advance the status of women; (c) to develop a spirit of friendship and unity among soroptimists of all countries; (d) to quicken the spirit of service and human understanding; (e) to contribute to international understanding and universal friendship. Clubs worldwide work within the same six programme areas of economic and social development, education, environment, health, human rights/status of women, and international goodwill and understanding. The policy of SI is to be concerned with international and national issues that relate to its objects and programmes. On matters of political controversy between nations, party politics and sectarian religion, SI maintains a position of strict neutrality.

Participation in Conferences and other meetings

SI representatives have participated in each of the sessions of the Council's numerous preparatory committee meetings and sessions of subsidiary bodies dealing with opening of the International Year of the Family (Vienna and New York) and follow-on meetings of the Vienna NGO Committee on the Family; status of women; ageing; narcotic drugs and substance abuse; elimination of discrimination against women; health; women, employment and entrepreneurship; human rights; environment and sustainable development; population and development; women and peace; refugee women; traditional practices adversely affecting the health of women and children; prevention of discrimination and protection of minorities; the girl child; human settlements (Habitat); crime prevention; HIV-AIDS; sexual exploitation; rights of the child; child labour; nutrition; and review of arrangements for consultations with NGOs. SI has also been represented at other meetings and conferences including a large delegation to the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995), which included our members from developing countries, as well as the Nordic Forum (Turku, Finland, 1994), and all regional preparatory meetings, i.e., Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (Jakarta, 1994), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (Mar del Plata, 1994), Economic Commission for Europe (Vienna, 1994; SI organized and ran a workshop on action for women in a changing world, education for women, women as partners in the economy and training women as entrepreneurs), Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (Amman, 1994) and Economic Commission for Africa (Dakar, 1994). Other conferences and meetings included: International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 1994); NGO World Forum on Drug Demand Reduction (Bangkok, 1994); Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (Bridgetown, Barbados, 1994); World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995; SI organized and ran a workshop on the theme "Education for girls and women: best investment"); Habitat II (Istanbul, 1996; SI organized and ran a workshop, an exhibition and a poster competition); World Congress Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (Stockholm, 1996); World Food Summit (Rome, 1996); Commission on the Status of Women (New York, 1994, 1995, 1996 and 1997); Commission on Sustainable Development (New York, 1994, 1995, 1996 and 1997); Commission on Social Development (New York, 1997);

Commission on Narcotic Drugs (Vienna, 1994, 1995, 1996 and 1997); Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (Vienna, 1994, 1995 and 1997); General Conference of United Nations Industrial Development Organization (Vienna, 1996, 1997); Commission on Human Rights and Subcommission on Prevention of Racial Discrimination and Minorities (Geneva, 1994, 1995, 1996 and 1997); International Labour Conference (Geneva, 1994, 1995, 1996 and 1997); UNESCO twelfth collective consultation on literacy (Tokyo, 1995); Fifth International Conference on Adult Education (Hamburg, 1997); and World Health Assembly (Geneva, 1994, 1995, 1996 and 1997). Special events included World Habitat Day; International Day of the Elderly; World AIDS Day; Human Rights Day and Women's Day celebrations. Statements were made to the following forums: launch IYF in 1994; Commission on the Status of Women in 1994, 1996 and 1997; World Summit for Social Development in 1995; substantive session of 1995 of the Council; review conference of States Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (Vienna 1995); Sixth General Conference of UNIDO (Vienna, 1995); Habitat II (Istanbul, 1996); World Congress Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (Stockholm, 1995); World Food Summit (Rome, 1996); sixth session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, in 1997; and nineteenth special session of the General Assembly. SI joined with other NGOs in preparing and signing a large number of statements to the Council and its subsidiary bodies between 1994 and 1997.

Cooperation with United Nations bodies and agencies

SI has representatives accredited to the Council in New York and at Geneva and Vienna; the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees at Geneva; UNICEF in New York and at Geneva; the ILO at Geneva; UNIDO at Vienna and UNESCO in Paris. It also has official relations with the World Health Organization at Geneva. The representatives have served on various NGO committees and working groups, including committees dealing with: Fourth World Conference on Women; CEDAW; review of arrangements for consultations with NGOs; UNIFEM (Vice-Chair 1996–1998 and Secretary 1994–1996); status of women (Treasurer 1994–1996); shelter and community (Vice-Chair 1994–1995); task forces on women and decision-making; and violence against women; ageing; women's health; status of women; elderly women; health and the environment; the girl child (UNICEF); youth; narcotics and substance abuse; the family; sustainable development; UNICEF — Children in Crisis Situations; rights of the child; child labour; child prostitution and child pornography; child sexual abuse; women refugees; traditional practices adversely affecting the health of women and children; and nutrition and development. SI has also actively participated on the CONGO Board and was an elected member until 1997. UNICEF: SI contributed to an appeal project in December 1997 (initial donation of $117,000), entitled "From labour to learning in India", through the "Joyful learning" initiative. This project will provide education through dance, song and mime, as well as more conventional methods of teaching, to equip children to get themselves and their families out of poverty. UNIFEM: Soroptimists worldwide contributed to the UNIFEM "Dollars for women campaign". UNHCR: $98,000 was given to a project to aid Somali refugee women who were victims of violence (1994). In cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross, $127,000 was donated to a project which helped to reunite displaced families in former Yugoslavia (1995). SI is very actively involved as one of the five women's NGOs responsible for project FIVE-O, a cooperative venture, in collaboration with UNESCO, which helps women in developing countries in vocational and other training.

Implementation of United Nations resolutions

Soroptimists continue to be a global voice for women through awareness, advocacy and action and by promoting relationships with the United Nations. SI members strive for human rights for all, and equality, development and peace through international goodwill and understanding. They support United Nations resolutions by being committed to service to local, national and international communities, and by active participation in decision-making at all levels of society. Delegates at the Fifteenth SI Quadrennial Convention at San Francisco, in July 1995, voted to universally adopt the 12 critical areas of concern contained in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action as the 1995–1999 SI programme focus, and members worldwide have been continually monitoring Governments' actions in support of the commitments they made at Beijing. Soroptimists worldwide remain steadfast in urging their national Governments to ratify and sign the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and support laws granting gender equality. They also advocate the ratification and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Clubs have responded to the following United Nations special years: 1994 International Year of the Family (when SI was awarded a testimonial in recognition of its exemplary support); International Year of Tolerance, 1995 (when SI representatives to UNESCO were instrumental in setting up

and running a poster competition); and International Year for the Eradication of Poverty, 1996. Work continues in the field of human rights and the advancement of the status of women, with two notable appeals in cooperation with the Mines Advisory Group: (a) in 1995, members contributed US$ 218,000 to fund a community landmine education programme to train selected people from communities in the Lao People's Democratic Republic to survey, mark and clear landmines, and (b) in 1996 US$ 302,000 was donated to fund "Project safe journey — Angola" to clear heavily mined areas which were preventing refugees returning home to Angola from Zambia and former Zaire.

Consultations have taken place between SI representatives and members of the United Nations Secretariat in New York, Geneva and Vienna on items of concern being debated by related United Nations bodies. Between 1994 and 1997, SI International Presidents visited and had regular consultations with the secretariats of the United Nations and its specialized agencies in New York, Geneva and Vienna, and at UNESCO in Paris.

Many communications addressed to NGOs by United Nations agencies received full attention by SI, whether requests for information or invitations to nominate experts to take part in special activities and meetings.

Economic and social development

Soroptimists worldwide worked to eradicate the persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women; actively ensured equality between men and women in the sharing of power and decision-making at all levels; fostered gender equality in economic structures and policies, and in all forms of productive activity; and worked in all ways possible to strive for sufficient mechanisms at all levels to promote the advancement of women. This was achieved through projects which promoted the training of women and girls (particularly in non-traditional occupations); economic literacy programmes; active encouragement of women as entrepreneurs by supporting all business enterprises; the promotion of income-generating projects; and acknowledgement of the role of women in decision-making and as role models for female advancement.

Education

Soroptimists ensured equality of access to education, and enabled the girl child to reach her full potential by funding and supporting basic, functional and computer literacy programmes; hosting language training for migrant women; advocating provision of library services; providing scholarships to enable women to develop literacy skills; encouraging education in parenting; promoting provision of training opportunities for women and girls, particularly in scientific, technical and managerial subjects; and actively promoting and funding re-entry programmes for women. Many thousands of dollars continue to be donated by soroptimists to literacy projects around the world in support of SI's sincere belief that education for women is the key to progress in relation to the ultimate goal of equality, development and peace.

Environment

Soroptimists ensured recognition and support for women's contribution to managing natural resources and safeguarding the environment through projects which studied air quality; fresh and marine water and soil conditions; sanitation; all forms of pollution; deforestation and erosion. They continued to work to combat problems connected with solid and hazardous wastes and toxic chemicals, as well as reduction, reuse and recycling of products, wherever possible. Soroptimists planted thousands of trees and supported many projects which protected habitats.

Health

Soroptimists prevented illness and promoted wellness for the whole life cycle by donating US$ 716,000 to a joint project with Sight Savers in Bangladesh, which established seven under-fives clinics to provide services for children and information for their mothers in preventing child blindness; until 1999, funding a project with the Population and Community Development Association (US$ 461,000 already donated) to provide AIDS education and alternatives to prostitution for women in northern Thailand; and supporting numerous projets in the areas of nutrition, hygiene, cancer screening, immunization, prevention of cardiovascular diseases, drug and substance abuse, support of the Safe Motherhood Initiative, traditional practices, genetic (hereditary) diseases and prevention of accidents. Positive support systems continue to be encouraged, particularly for the elderly and those with chronic diseases, including dementia and cancer, with support also being given to the carers of those sufferers. The problem of HIV/AIDS has also been addressed by advocating education, information, encouragement of research, support of human rights of patients and families affected, and the participation of women in prevention and control.

Human rights/status of women

Soroptimists have endeavoured to halt violence against women; pledged awareness and commitment to international

and national norms and standards that endorse and safeguard the full and equal enjoyment by women of all human rights, and increased participation of women in conflict resolution and decision-making in peace and security activities; and reduced the impact of armed and other kinds of conflicts on women by continued hands-on support and provision of education for women and children who are victims or likely victims of violence and abuse. Counselling and assistance has been provided to family groups; support has been provided for the rights of the child, with action to eliminate all forms of child exploitation; the advancement of women has been worked towards by ensuring equality in economic, social and political participation; and the care and rights of the aged have been focused upon, including the recognition and encouragement of their contribution to society.

International goodwill and understanding

Soroptimists have utilized mass media to advance women's positive contributions to society, and given assistance to refugees, migrants and displaced persons, in particular women and children. This has been done by encouraging intercultural understanding, assisting in projects with other NGOs and providing aid and support, particularly to affected areas of Eastern Europe.

At SI and federation conferences and conventions, there have been United Nations speakers and United Nations-related topics as agenda items. The organization publishes a quarterly magazine, *The International Soroptimist*, in English, French and Japanese, which is widely circulated to United Nations offices. The four federations within the organization each publishes its own magazine, all giving extensive coverage to the work of the United Nations and the work of its specialized agencies. Reports of meetings, resolutions and important directives which are in line with the aims and work of SI are also covered in those publications.